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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER OCI #0961/72
29 Aug. 1972Husak on the Trials--Again

Party leader Husak has finally admitted, though obliquely, that some Western communist parties have been critical of the recent subversion trials. He had been chided by the Yugoslav media on 18 August for not mentioning that friends in the West were showing displeasure with the proceedings. In a speech dedicating a bridge in Bratislava on 26 August, Husak lamented that "certain representatives of the progressive forces in the West played into the hands of the bourgeois anti-communist campaign," thus showing an "astonishingly indifference to objective information about Czechoslovakia." By again returning to this subject of the trials, Husak has demonstrated Czechoslovak hyper-sensitivity toward foreign criticism. By continually defending their actions, regime leaders are only adding fuel to the fire. Criticism will only beget more criticism.

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Romanian-Soviet Relations and the Bessarabian Question

Although there has been a certain degree of relaxation in Romanian-Soviet relations since the first of the year, veiled hostility surfaces from time to time. The most recent example of these ups and downs showed itself in connection with Romania's "liberation" day on 23 August. While the anniversary message from the Soviet leadership to the Romanian hierarchy was somewhat warmer than last year's, Moldavian party chief Bodyul published an article in Pravda on 22 August in which he glorified the russification of his bailiwick and criticized nationalism.

Bodyul's article probably is intended to be a response to portions of Ceausescu's speech last month to his national party conference, at which he defended Romanian nationalism and by implication criticized Soviet occupation of Bessarabia which now forms part of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. At the conference, Ceausescu condemned the Vienna "diktat" of 1940, by which Romania lost Transylvania to Hungary and the southern Dobrudja to Bulgaria. No Romanian needed to be reminded, however, that the country had also lost two other territories in 1940--Bessarabia and northern Bukovina--both of which were annexed by the USSR. Bodyul's article indicates the Soviets also do not need to be reminded.

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Yugoslav Vice-Premier in Moscow

The arrival of a high-level Yugoslav economic delegation in Moscow on 25 August (led by Vice-Premier Sirotkovic) prompted a commentary that same day over radio Zagreb on the state on Yugoslav-Soviet trade relations. Speaking in glowing terms about the prospects for increased trade, the commentator noted that the Soviet Union already ranks third in Yugoslav foreign trade (this year's value is expected to exceed \$600 million), and that the USSR is the biggest importer of Yugoslav goods.

25X1 The delegation originally was to leave for Moscow on 8 August, but for an unexplained reason, the trip was postponed until last Friday. 25X1 [redacted] Sirotkovic will be negotiating credit arrangements with the Soviets estimated by some sources to be as high as \$1.3 billion. 25X1 [redacted]

A Matter of Inches

On 25 August the Bulgarian press denounced the US for bombing a Bulgarian-built hospital in North Vietnam and billed the attack as a "new barbaric crime" in violation of the "most elementary rules of international law and conduct."

The allegation was the first claim in recent memory that a Bulgarian project in North Vietnam had been attacked, and it possibly heralds an upswing in anti-US feeling. A strong increase in the vitriolic, however, would be in contrast to coverage in June, when a low of only 77 column inches (or 2.6% of 3000 inches) was devoted to anti-American propaganda. March produced the year's reported high of 288 inches in comparison with the previous low of 93 in January. A marked upsurge of propaganda emanating from the Bulgarian leadership, while not to be ruled out, would appear doubtful at this time due to Sofia's desire to have more harmonious relations with the US. 25X1

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